



## WE WILL PROTECT OUR PLANET

“Without more determined action we will continue to impoverish our planet with less biodiversity and fewer natural resources. We will see more environmental threats and climate-related challenges, including natural disasters, drought, desertification, food shortages, water scarcity, wildfires, sea level rise and depletion of the oceans. The time to act is now. Many countries, not least Small Island developing states, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, are already among the most affected. We need to adapt to the circumstances and take transformative measures. We have a historic opportunity to build back better and greener. We need to immediately curb greenhouse gas emissions and achieve sustainable consumption and production patterns in line with applicable state commitments to the Paris Agreement and in line with the 2030 Agenda. This cannot wait.”

*United Nations General Assembly, “[UN75 Declaration](#)”, September 2020, A/RES/75/1.*

“As a consequence of government inaction, climate change is expected to continue worsening and to put humanity at risk by 2045 if there is no radical change in the policies of countries and industries.”

*UNRWA Youth unit, Lebanon, ages 16-30s, students, mostly women.*

### UN75 DATA ON THIS COMMITMENT

UN75 dialogues



UN75 survey



Media analysis



Research snapshot



We organize the relevant UN75 data gathered across 2020 according to the [UN75 Declaration's 12 commitments](#). For the full methodology, see the UN75 report “[Shaping Our Future Together](#)”.

# FROM THE UN75 DIALOGUES<sup>1</sup>

## WHERE WE ARE NOW

**Dialogue participants identified climate change and biodiversity loss as the most urgent crises facing humanity.** With consequences far greater than those resulting from COVID-19, participants were concerned that world leaders had shifted their attention away from addressing the fundamental challenge of climate change and biodiversity loss. Participants observed that the global response to COVID-19 demonstrates what is possible if we choose to respond urgently to global crises, but participants were frustrated that leaders are not acting with the urgency needed when the future of our species, and many others, is at stake.

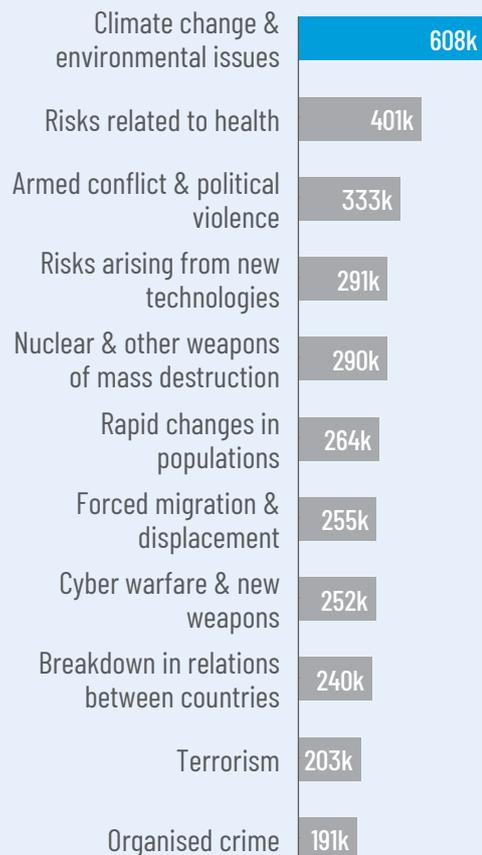
*“As climate change accelerates, the atmosphere is and will be further weakened by excessive carbon emissions. Various plant and animal species will become extinct. Seasonal changes will disappear. Air pollution will worsen.”*

*Won Sanghyuk, Yeongwol County Youth Training Center, Republic of Korea, <15 years, students, mostly boys.*

**Young people felt disenfranchised and disempowered** as they discussed the current age of the ‘anthropocene’, where humans shape living systems and the climate and the subsequent impact on terrestrial, marine and aquatic biodiversity, ocean health and water resources. They discussed the dire impact that air pollution, waste and plastics in the ocean and the overconsumption of natural resources is having on health and natural

amenities, biodiversity loss, more frequent, intense and wide-reaching wildfires, natural disasters and future pandemics.

### UN75 Survey long-term global threats: UN75 survey respondents in all regions identified climate change and environmental issues as the top long-term threat



UN75 Survey Question: Which of these global trends do you think will most affect our future? Base: 1,220,848 (all respondents). Participants could select up to three responses.

1. This report contains a summary of the analysis of 1,141 UN75 dialogue summaries received from 94 countries between 2 January and 7 November 2020. The dialogue summaries were analyzed in partnership with the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. For the full methodology, see the UN75 report [“Shaping Our Future Together”](#).

“In the end, we will live with primitive insecurity in a dazzling growth and cutting-edge society.”

*Goriul Youth Culture House, Republic of Korea, ages 16-30s, mixed professions and genders.*

**Dialogue participants across age groups acknowledge that youth will pay the price for climate change more so than the today’s decision-makers, and that they must have a voice in how, as a global community, we respond to its challenge.** Participants raised several essential elements of a sustainable future: an economy that fully values nature, a justice system that views environmental destruction as a crime, and a social orientation that values people and place and a more equal distribution of resources above a system that fuels poverty, inequality and environmental destruction and the concentration of wealth in the hands of the very few.

“Without better environmental protection we will have no world left for future generations... Climate change is our most urgent, important priority. All actors must be involved in climate change... we see this as an interconnected reality, not simply as an issue.”

*Beth Blissman, Ph.D., UN NGO Rep. for Loretto Community & Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Dubuque, Iowa, USA, mixed ages, professions, genders.*

**Participants stressed that environmental destruction must be viewed as a human rights and criminal justice issue,** and that the voices of poor, vulnerable, marginalized and Indigenous peoples must be central to our collective response to climate change and biodiversity loss. Participants discussed the unequal impact on vulnerable communities, such as those living in Small Island Developing States, and areas prone to natural disaster and other climate change effects.

Participants stressed the strong justice dimension, articulating that the right to a healthy environment is a human right. The vulnerable pay a heavier price for unsustainable resource use and wealth accumulation by a few. Participants want clearly defined accountability and justice mechanisms.

They also discussed the grave effects of desertification, wildfires, the depletion of oceans, air pollution, and forest loss, and the impact on human societies, particularly the most vulnerable.

“The inevitable climate change effects that will continue despite immediate action, and will disproportionately affect marginalized populations.”

*UN Association, USA, San Diego, mixed ages and genders, managers and professionals.*

## WHERE WE WANT TO BE

**Participants argued that fundamental and transformational change is needed to protect our planet, and that these transformations are necessary on all levels** – within our social, economic and political systems, as well as in our collective and individual understanding of our place in the world – within our environment and alongside our fellow living creatures. Some participants discussed the need for a radical cultural and spiritual change to build a world based on respect, empathy and humility, and to appreciate the indivisible links and reliance we have with/on each other and our environment. Building a more sustainable world can coincide with building a more equal world.

**Participants stressed that responding to environmental challenges will require all actors working in cohesion – everyone, everywhere, across sectors.** Actions must be taken by governments, individuals, international organizations,

local communities, the private sector and scientists. Those 15 years old or younger called on our species to be at its best – a global family, one world, working together.

*“Over the last decades, medicinal, technological and scientific progress has enabled us to open our minds and discover the world faster and better than it was ever possible before. Whilst we recognize that these advancements have bettered our lives and given us a better understanding of our world and each other, they have negatively affected the way we interact with our environments and the way those environments interact with each other.”*

*New College of the Humanities at Northeastern (London), UK, ages 16-30, students, mixed genders.*

## HOW WE CAN GET THERE

Participants offered a multitude of ideas for action and concrete solutions, with communities bearing the impact voicing solutions for the particular challenges they face. For example, participants from large developing country cities identified issues such as air pollution, litter and toxic contamination, while those from areas subject to loss through climate change, such as Indigenous communities from less developed states highlighted the effects on cultural loss and livelihoods.

### On learning from the pandemic

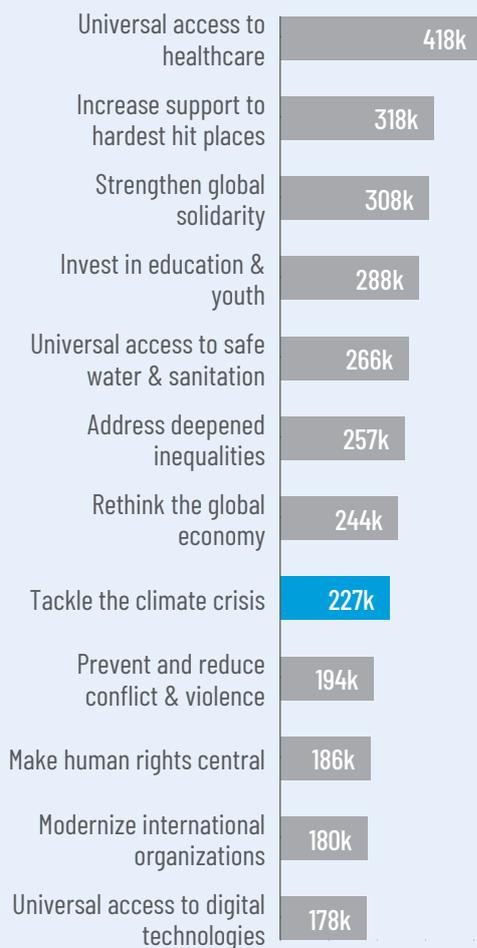
**The pandemic was viewed as a wake-up call to the fragility of our species**, providing lessons that can contribute to sustainability:

- Not to lose sight of the environmental crisis while addressing the pandemic. The pandemic is a small and short-term problem compared to climate change, biodiversity loss and their effects.
- The pandemic illustrates the links between habitat destruction and human health, and

that climate change makes us vulnerable to future pandemics.

- Rapid government reactions to the pandemic and the difficult things governments asked of their citizens have helped, in the short-term, reduce carbon

**UN75 Survey immediate priorities to recover from the pandemic: 225,000+ respondents selected Tackle the climate crisis as a top short-term priority**



UN75 Survey Question: What should the international community prioritize to recover better from the pandemic? Base: 1,133,501 (all respondents as from 22 April, when this question was added). Participants could select up to three responses.

emissions and demonstrate that changes previously thought to be impossible are, in fact possible, and that governments must be as bold in their response to climate change.

- Despite the practical difficulties experienced by communities around the world in lockdown over the course of 2020, participants suggested a short, annual lockdown to protect the planet could remind us that adopting a lifestyle that radically reduces our environmental footprint is possible.

**On building awareness and enhancing environmental education**

- **Education in schools is viewed as critical** to create a generation of students who are more responsible and attentive to environmental protection. Climate literacy was deemed by some participants as mandatory in primary and secondary schooling, with primary school helping children understand the interconnectedness of natural systems, our place within the environment and to foster appreciation and curiosity for the natural world, and secondary education providing an understanding of how environmental issues can impact students’ lives.
- **Teachers need support** to understand the issues and to build climate and environment curricula. External experts and government actors can support schools through initiatives that deliver sustainability modules across schools and regions.
- **Schools of higher education** and especially those of architecture, design and engineering, can be engines of change, teaching sustainability principles and techniques.

- Informal education, the media and local and community authorities can all build greater public awareness of environmental issues.
- The arts sector can build awareness of climate change.
- Businesses can increase awareness of environmental issues among employees and consumers, encouraging greater sustainability in the products and services they offer.
- Transparent information about environmental and social costs of goods and services should be provided to consumers. All trade should be Fair trade.
- National and local authorities can support communities to be informed about the issues that affect them, such as reducing energy poverty about sustainable practice.
- Enhancing knowledge of environmental issues within vulnerable and marginalised groups can help them advocate for their interests in local, national and international discussions and forums.
- Access to digital tech can build environmental awareness, especially in remote communities.

### On building sustainable systems

#### Building Sustainable Economies

- Participants urged governments to **stop subsidizing fossil fuels**.
- Pension funds and other investors were encouraged to only invest in ethical and sustainable funds.
- Insurance coverage should extend to climate-affected countries.

### Sustainable consumption and production

Dialogue participants understood that systemic change, sector by sector, in the way we produce and consume is essential for the

**UN75 Survey long-term priorities: More environmental protection top long-term priority, with 300,000+ also prioritizing more sustainable consumption and production**



UN75 Survey Question: Taking a longer view, if you picture the world you want in 25 years, what three things would you most want to see? Base: 1,220,848 (all respondents). Participants could select up to three responses.

**paradigm shift needed to meet sustainability challenges.** Participants voiced the need for sustainable, fair and inclusive economies and for sustainability criteria to inform financing and investments at all levels. Meeting environmental challenges was viewed as an opportunity to build more equitable, just, local and sustainable economic systems.

“We should make sure that more resources are used to incentivize citizens to make green choices in a way that is socially and economically efficient and that doesn’t require knowledge and research to make the correct choice. Misinformation is everywhere in the time of social media and the 24-hour news cycle. Think about solutions that make it easy to choose green.”

*Dr. Peter Stiling and Dr. Brooke Hansen, University of South Florida, USA, ages 31-45, mixed professions and genders.*

“Consumerist culture should be seen as a main driver of the environmental and socio-economic challenges we face today. It will continue to hinder the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and increase environmental and health risks.”

*IUVENTA - Slovak Youth Institute, Slovakia, ages 16-30, students, mixed genders.*

**Dialogue participants called for sustainable consumption and production patterns that generate ‘green jobs’.** Industry, governments, individuals, and the global community were called on to transform the following sectors and areas:

- **Sustainable diets:** Support the adoption of affordable and sustainable plant-based diets, including artificial meat to reduce forest conversion to rangelands and other habitat destruction. Reduce food waste and localise food production facilities. Invest in and promote innovative solutions such as the ‘Clear your plate’ app that offers rewards when diners upload pictures of their empty plates. Ensure decent livelihoods for food system workers.

“It is absolutely necessary to rethink our approach to food, clothes and objects, production quality and consumption.”

*New College of the Humanities at Northeastern (London), UK, ages 16-30, students, mixed genders.*

- **Sustainable fashion:** Educate consumers on the environmental and ethical cost of fast fashion so that consumers value clothes as long term, and choose functional items rather than disposable fashion items. The pricing of clothes should reflect their environmental cost and should adequately reward those who made them.

“The global environment continues to deteriorate due to a combination of increased industrialization, excessive use of non-renewable energy resources, multiplication of non-environmentally friendly production methods, and lack of decoupling of economic growth and resource use.”

*Youth Initiation for Democracy. President Tamara Tartarashvili, Georgia, ages 16-30, mixed professions and genders.*

- **Sustainable energy:** Governments and the private sector should invest in sustainable energy technology. Higher human development countries and energy experts can support developing countries with advice and technology. Support should be given to the biofuels, solar and wind technology industries. Research and development of sustainable aviation and shipping fuels are vital, with fossil fuel use de-incentivized and reduced.

“Successful implementation of such initiatives will help low-income households meet their energy needs in a sustainable way, contribute to the green transformation of the economy, combat climate change and create jobs.”

*UN Academic Impact, global online dialogue, mixed ages, professions, genders.*

- **Sustainable transport:** Hybrid vehicles could be made mandatory and governments could invest in more low carbon public transportation options. The UN can encourage safe and sustainable transport systems through global collaboration on funding, youth empowerment and capacity building.
- **Sustainability in built infrastructure and industrial design:** Governments, multilateral organizations, investment bodies and the private sector can support and incentivize research and development of sustainable materials and invest in their use. The construction sector can promote sustainable and energy efficient architecture, design and use of sustainable and local building materials.

“Urbanization trends are presently unsustainable from an economic, social and environmental point of view, and risk exacerbating inequality, vulnerability and environmental degradation by 2045.”

*UNRWA Youth unit, Lebanon, ages 16-30, students, mixed genders.*

- **Sustainable packaging:** Single use packaging, plastic bags, the consumption of plastics and other synthetic material should be phased out through government regulation and private sector innovation to promote sustainable materials.
- **Reducing built-in obsolescence:** The private sector should reduce built-in obsolescence and offer repair services, as well as take responsibility for waste, internalize the true cost of products and services they offer. Production and use of disposable products should be disincentivized.
- **Ethical waste management:** Zero waste policies should be introduced, with governments and industries supporting repair, reuse and recycling. Waste, particularly toxic waste, should not be exported to those least able to cope with it.
- **Consumerism:** Individuals should take responsibility for buying ethically and consuming less. Consumers can be informed about their choices through increased mobile phone apps that inform consumers of the environmental cost of products and services.
- **Trade in wildlife:** Wildlife should be monitored to prevent the transfer of diseases from animals to humans.

- **Research, development, policy and regulation of clean technologies:** Governments can support innovation in sustainable technologies through platforms that ease market access to small and medium clean-tech companies. Governments can develop bold policy and regulation, as well as facilitate innovation that will require sustainable production and consumption.
- **Sustainable cities:** Recognising the impact of urbanisation on people and the natural environment, dialogue participants wanted to see a rethinking of our cities as part of a sustainable paradigm shift. Governments, local authorities and the private sector were encouraged to invest in infrastructure transformation, including maintaining and creating green spaces in cities and reducing carbon footprints through nature-based solutions. Designated streets should be closed to cars, for use solely by pedestrians and cyclists to create public green spaces. Governments should invest more in public transport. Participants saw local communities within cities as an important starting point for climate action, encouraging local authorities to support small, local actions.

## Climate change, cultural loss and cultural resilience

**Dialogue participants recognized the links between culture and climate change, expressing concerns about what is being, and could yet be lost.** Participants highlighted the risk of loss of traditions, practices and cultural heritage among communities living in areas susceptible to climate change, such as Indigenous communities and those living in Small Island Developing States. The UN can work closely with such communities to protect

their interests. Protecting the interests of communities whose cultures are affected by climate change should be viewed as the responsibility of all nations. The costs should not be borne by the communities themselves, but by national and international communities.

*“This is the first time in the history of this area that we have lost the connection between the crafts, the ecology and community, society. It is very likely that we will no longer be practicing our culture and traditions. And of course, as new generations come along, it is very easy to lose language as you adopt the language of your host country.”*

*The Future is Unwritten, online dialogue, mixed countries, ages 46-60, managers and professionals, mixed genders.*

*“Member states of the United Nations need to incorporate the protection of heritage sites in low-lying areas and SIDS in all their plans.”*

*The Future is Unwritten, online dialogue, mixed countries, ages 46-60, managers and professionals, mixed genders.*

*“Preserving our public resources such as Mongolian nomadic culture, pastoralism, and pastureland is not just Mongolia’s responsibility to preserve this last nomadic culture and civilization but it must be responsibility of the UN.”*

*Dialogue organized by Resident Coordinator Office, Mongolia, mixed ages, professions, genders.*

## Ecosystems and the sustainable use of natural resources

“Water facilitates the interconnectedness and inter-linkages with other sectors like agriculture, industry, energy and environment. Water connects policy areas in the economic sector as well as societies. It is a tool for cooperation and trust.”

*Online, global dialogue organized by UN Academic Impact, mixed ages, professions, genders.*

**Participants discussed many actions that can better manage ecosystems and natural resources including oceans and water resources, and called for better prevention and management of natural disasters:**

- **Any further loss of forest and other ecosystems must be halted.** Recognition of the enormous scale of loss should be formalised. The diversity of species and ecosystems that remain is the most precious asset we have and must not be lost.
- Oceans: Build **multilateral, multi-sectorial partnerships to protect our oceans** and create a blue new deal. Promote cleaning the ocean. Establish a global biodiversity alliance and establish a marine police agency.

“We need to supplement academic research with policies to protect our oceans.”

*International Association for Political Science, online dialogue, mixed countries and genders, ages 16-30, students.*

- Water resources: **Institute sustainable solutions for water problems** via effective legislation and new water management policies and practices.
- Natural disaster management: Climate change was perceived as already causing more frequent, intense and dangerous natural disasters, with devastating impacts on vulnerable communities and further contributing to emissions. **Participants shared alarm at the 2019-2020 wildfires in the South East of Australia** that were uncharacteristically dangerous, intense and frequent. While fires occur naturally in some savanna and forest landscapes, they do not occur with the frequency or intensity seen in recent decades, and certain sensitive ecosystems, such as the Amazon, are not adapted to coping with fire. Participants encouraged policy makers to **better prevent and manage fires** in these ecosystems.

Address “forest fires and environmental risks (Amazon rainforest).”

*Global Young Leader Initiative, Germany, ages 16-30, mixed professionals and genders.*

- Prioritizing nature based solutions: To address climate change, biodiversity loss and disaster risk management, participants encouraged governments and the UN to **prioritize nature-based solutions** that value and protect the natural systems on which we rely and that bring multiple benefits. They can be used to mitigate emissions and adapt to climate change, and can protect and restore forests, catchments, coastal environments and peatlands, as well as greening our cities and re-wilding degraded agricultural and industrial lands.

“Strengthen judicial and other accountability mechanisms to ensure businesses, companies and countries are held accountable on the global stage for non-compliance, especially where the environment is concerned.”

*Kerri Fergusson, New Zealand, mixed ages and professions, mostly women.*

- **Indigenous peoples’ knowledge systems and nature-based solutions should be respected and harnessed.** Participants shared how the traditional fire knowledge of Indigenous communities, combined with modern methods of verifying the emissions savings of these practices, is being harnessed in the north of Australia to manage fire prone savanna and dry forest landscapes through early dry season burning. This is found to reduce emissions, prevent biodiversity loss, restore degraded forest landscapes, create economic opportunities for remote communities, and enhance social and health indicators, while valuing the ecological knowledge of some of the most ancient living cultures on earth.

“It’s really important that we understand that traditional ecological knowledge is just as important as western knowledge, and if we can bring those two together, to complement the work we are all trying to address in climate change, it is a win-win for everybody.”

*International Savanna Fire Management Initiative, Australia and global (online), mixed ages and genders, Indigenous fire managers.*

## Mainstreaming the environment in cross sectoral planning

**Participants emphasized the indivisibility of our environment with our health and well-being.** UN agencies should have a ‘One Health’ approach when tackling health challenges, highlighting the relationship between the environment and social well-being and with cross-sectoral policy planning.

“Environment and health are directly linked and we cannot ignore climate change anymore.”

*Dialogue organized by WHO, Lebanon, ages 16-30, mixed professions and genders.*

## Insisting on accountability

**Dialogue participants from across regions demanded greater accountability for excessive resource use and environmental destruction.** Environmental destruction and climate change were viewed as profiting a few at the expense of many, with calls for greater accountability. Participants called for a clean and healthy environment and intergenerational equity to be characterized as human rights issues.

“Strict rules and punishments for those who are not carbon friendly and have high carbon footprints.”

*Mr. Duncan, Asker International School, Norway, <15 years, students, mixed genders.*

“The cycle of climate change and capitalism threaten basic human rights.”

*Goriul Youth Culture House, Republic of Korea, ages 16-30, mixed professions and genders.*

Across all regions, those 30 and younger called for greater accountability of individuals, businesses and governments who are part of the problem and/or who fail to be part of the solution:

- **Human Rights:** New concepts of Human Rights and the environment should be developed, with climate change and air pollution linked to Human Rights.

*“In the end, all states were urged to fulfill their human rights obligations by taking bold action to improve health, address climate change, and beat air pollution.”*

*Shakti Nandan - Confederation of Young Leaders, India, ages 16-30, students, mostly women.*

- **Criminal justice:** Destruction of the environment warrants criminal sanctions on national and international levels. Governments and the international community should recognize, prevent and enforce action against environmental crimes.
- **Strengthening accountability in multilateralism:** The UN could create a legal mechanism to hold Member States accountable for the mitigation of climate change (e.g. the use of plastics and recycling). The UN could enforce environmental taxes in the event of “fine dust”, increased carbon emissions, and other forms of environmental pollution and destruction. Consequences should be strengthened for withdrawing from the Paris agreement. Liability for environmental damages should be strengthened, including through compensation payments for countries negatively affected by climate change.

*“UN Member States are more focused on their own national interests and developments and will always place that before environmental issues and climate change. Concrete measures and agreements must be put into place to ensure joint responses. They must invoke consequences in the case of non-compliance. Withdrawals from international climate agreements, such as the U.S.A. from the Paris agreement, should be impossible.”*

*Jeong Jin-heyang, Republic of Korea, ages 31-45, mixed professions, mostly women.*

- **Strengthening accountability in Member States.** Stricter regulations should be introduced for the management of the environment and climate, requiring industries to stay within emissions limits, and policies that compel companies to buy emissions permits, with the value of these used to aid climate vulnerable communities.

### **Strengthening multilateral commitments**

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- While the UNFCCC is voluntary, its implementation should be increased.
- All Member States should comply with the Paris Agreement, and future climate agreements and policies should be negotiated. The UN should challenge Member States who refuse to comply with the Paris Agreement.
- Strong policies addressing climate change must be established beyond the UN level.

“Strengthen the international legal framework for climate action, improve the Paris Agreement and set more binding provision for climate mitigation.”

*School of international and public affairs, Jilin University, China, ages 16-30, mixed professions and genders.*

## The role of science in protecting our planet

Participants highlighted the rise of misinformation that has increased with the use of social media, the lack of in-depth analysis encouraged by 24-hour news cycles, and the rise of populism that encourages mistrust of expert opinion. Participants emphasized the need for scientific data and analysis to inform policy decisions aimed at transformative change.

“If the international community is not prepared to conduct more serious research on climate change and follow urgent preventive measures, we may experience the end of life on Earth.”

*Masan Youth Culture House, Republic of Korea, ages 31-45, Managers and Professionals, mostly women.*

## Strengthen the role of the UN in protecting the planet

### Participants called on the UN and its Member States to lead international climate and environmental action:

- The UN can facilitate Member States to exchange useful and effective conservation practices to prevent/mitigate climate change.

“Problems we have today are not ones that can be solved by one single person, or one single country - we need arenas where we can work together, and where everyone has a voice. When the UN is operating at its best, it provides such a space and takes the lead on solving these complex challenges.”

*Beth Blissman, Ph.D., UN NGO Representative for the Loretto Community & the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Dubuque, Iowa, USA, mixed ages and professions, mostly women.*

- Member States could be recognized for preventing climate change and environmental degradation.
- The UN Secretary General can provide a platform to share best practices of innovative solutions and tech advancement across the globe. He can advocate for an online monitoring mechanism to assess progress on sustainability goals and track action on both adaptation and mitigation.
- The UN can encourage Member States to adopt regional adaptation strategies.
- Bolster UNITAR trainings for the private sector and non-profits about the impact of national actions.
- Develop a UN system-wide tracking system of climate change mitigation and adaptation activities and manage resources. UNDP’s Strategic Plan, which uses a results framework that allows UNDP and stakeholders to monitor outcomes, generate lessons, and hold accountability for the funds entrusted to it, could be used as a model to create a macro-level tracking system to facilitate the transfer of effective activities across countries and sectors and help manage resources.

- Incremental adaptation outcomes achieved over the past decade need to be consolidated, with new policies and practices that are grounded in development activities, for example through a UN-wide guideline outlining a common transformation adaptation strategy.
- The UN can set up dedicated climate change regional offices and appoint climate advocates, to help combat climate change.
- The UN can take further steps to include vulnerable communities in international climate negotiations.

“Like the blue helmets for UN Peacekeeping, there should be a green helmets group aimed to achieve UN climate action missions which help states/regions adapt and mitigate climate change”

*Zeppelin University Friedrichshafen, Germany, ages 16-30, students, mixed genders.*

## Valuing community and individual action

Many dialogues highlighted that action is required at all levels, and that community-based and individual actions are important alongside system level responses. In

particular, suggestions include:

- The macro-actions highlighted by the Paris Agreement should be complemented by the work done by local/regional groups.
- Local/regional environmental groups and organizations should be mobilized to develop stronger international networks and knowledge-sharing channels.

## Strengthen the voices of young people, marginalized and climate vulnerable communities

**Prioritize the voices and interests of those who have the most to lose in** all policy making and decision-making processes (not just token involvement) on the environment and climate at local, national, regional and global levels. Voices of poor and vulnerable communities, and Indigenous peoples, whose lives, livelihoods, health, cultural practices and lands are at risk from climate change and biodiversity loss must be at the forefront of consideration.

### Prioritize the voices of young people.

Participants from all age groups recognized that young people deserve a strong voice in decision-making that affects our planet. Young people also need support to actively participate in processes that affect them:

- Young people, who often understand and feel the urgency to act, can play a role in educating older people about the climate and environment and participate in decision-making and climate action.
- Countries can strengthen the right of youth to participate in the decision-making for international climate agreements, such as the role of youth in the Legislative Assemblies of the Brazilian federal states.

## MEDIA ANALYSIS<sup>2</sup>

### Climate change and its effects are the most visible environmental issues covered in the media, globally

44% of media coverage on environmental issues focused on global warming – climate change and its existing and projected effects. This is followed by biodiversity, with 38% of media coverage. Global warming was top in all regions except Europe and Central Asia, where it was second to biodiversity.

Some media discussed the potential for COVID-19 to lower pollution levels, as well as concerns that the pandemic had sidelined climate action. Solutions proposed in the media tended to look inward, focusing on domestic policies to protect biodiversity and to curb the impact of global warming, with the exception of higher human development countries in Northern America and Western Europe.

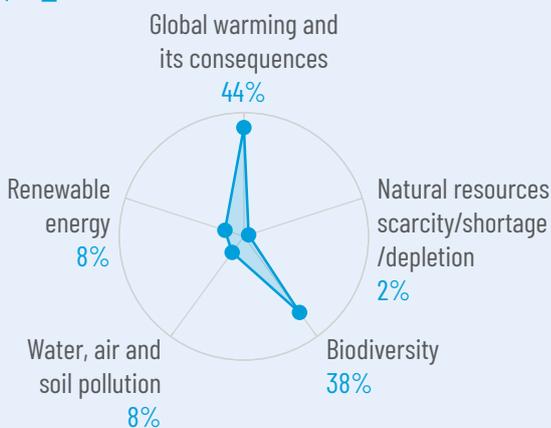
In Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, prominent media coverage was given to events such as the Australian and Amazon

fires. In Europe, media focused on local protests against government measures (e.g. in France and Hungary), as well as climate-related displacement. Media coverage of climate was generally lower and more inward-looking in Northern Africa and Western Asia.

In Northern America, the debate around the economic impact of climate change solutions was covered in the media, with young people and renewable energy emerging as stronger themes.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the media covered biodiversity, pollution, the impact of large companies and natural resource pressures, with more of a focus on solutions than other regions. In many lower human development countries, the media conveyed a sense of frustration with governments for not moving fast enough on capping corporate pollution or regulating the dumping of waste. In these countries, the UN was seen as a leader and a needed supporter, whereas in higher human development countries, the UN was viewed as a partner.

### Climate change and biodiversity are most reported on, across all regions



Edelman Intelligence Discovery+ | All languages | Media review in 70 countries | Date range: May 2019 – May 2020.

Asia & Australia	1. Climate change & its effects 2. Biodiversity (wildlife/plant life)
Europe & Central Asia	1. Biodiversity (wildlife/plant life) 2. Climate change & its effects
Latin America & Caribbean	1. Climate change & its effects 2. Biodiversity (wildlife/plant life)
Middle East & North Africa	1. Climate change & its effects 2. Biodiversity (wildlife/plant life)
North America	1. Climate change & its effects 2. Biodiversity (wildlife/plant life)
Sub-Saharan Africa	1. Climate change & its effects 2. Biodiversity (wildlife/plant life)

2. Edelman Intelligence analysed the global media landscape to gain insights into how megatrends are covered, including the perceived role of international cooperation and the United Nations. They analysed print, broadcast and online media, including social media, in 70 countries, covering the period May 2019 and May 2020. For the full methodology, see the UN75 report “[Shaping Our Future Together](#)”.

## RESEARCH SNAPSHOT<sup>3</sup>

### Academic publications

- Aykut, S, Foyer, J. & Morena, E. (eds) 2017 [Globalising the Climate: COP21 and the Climatisation of Global Debates](#).
- Carattini, S., Gosnell, G. & Tavoni, A. 2020 [“How developed countries can learn from developing countries to tackle climate change”](#) World Development.
- Diaz, S. et al. 2020 [“Set ambitious goals for biodiversity and sustainability”](#) Science.
- Dunnivant, F. 2017 [Environmental Success Stories: Solving Major Ecological Problems and Confronting Climate Change](#).
- Ivanova, M. 2020 [“Coloring the UN Environmental: The Catalytic Role of the UN Environment Programme”](#) Global Governance.
- Jakob, M. et al. 2020 [“Understanding different perspectives on economic growth and climate policy”](#) WIREs Climate Change.
- Ken, C. 2015 [An Unfinished Foundation: The UN and Global Environmental Governance](#).
- Kirton, J. & Kokotsis, E. 2017 [The Global Governance of Climate Change: G7, G20, and UN Leadership](#).
- Negi, A., Pérez-Pineda, J. & Blankenbach, J. (eds) 2020 [Sustainability Standards and Global Governance: Experiences of Emerging Economies](#).
- Pasztor, J. 2016 [“The Role of UN Secretary-General in the Climate Change Process”](#) Global Policy.
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- Reyers, B. & Selig, E. 2020 [“Global targets that reveal the social-ecological interdependencies of sustainable development”](#) Nature, Ecology & Evolution.
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3. This research snapshot includes a selection of top cited publications identified in the broader UN75 research mapping of academic and policy research focused on multilateralism, the United Nations, and the UN's areas of work, covering the six official UN languages. The research mapping was conducted in collaboration with the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. For the full methodology, see the UN75 report [“Shaping Our Future Together”](#).

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## Data resources & tools

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- [World Environment Situation Room](#) [UN].
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